

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 remain in the application without amendment.

Claims 1-5 have been rejected as being obvious over Japanese Patent JP 2002-169484 to Oshika in view of U.S. Patent 5,539,440 to Higuchi. This rejection is traversed.

At the outset, the references to Oshika and Higuchi are directed to completely divergent technologies and produce different results. One of ordinary skill in the art would not combine the Oshika and Higuchi references as the Examiner has proposed. Specifically, Oshika is related to an image display where the ink is applied to a surface and removed from the surface. In sharp contrast, Higuchi is specifically related to forming images on a plastic sheet or plain paper (see column 1, lines 7-11). Thus, Oshika is directed to a display technology where there is a rewritable surface, while Higuchi is unrelated to a display where the image displaying portion is rewritable. One of ordinary skill in the display art would not look to the printing technology of Higuchi, which is focused primarily on forming ink pixels without using a nozzle or which purportedly can "print an image that looks as solid as an image obtained by printing, at a running cost as low as that of the thermal transfer printer using melting ink". (see column 2, lines 53-56).

Furthermore, it should be understood that in Higuchi, the "ink holding layer 2" with the region 3a of good ink holding properties and region 3b of poor ink holding properties is on the drum. Higuchi is describing a process transfer ink from the drum 1 to paper 8. Thus, the image formation in Higuchi which is outputted is on the paper 8. One of ordinary skill in the rewritable display art would not look to technology related to a printing drum to solve a problem on a rewritable display. In short, Higuchi provides a solution for holding ink temporarily so that it can be transferred to a substrate for viewing purposes. In contrast, Oshika is related to the displayed image itself. One views the display in Oshika and the display itself is rewritable, while in Higuchi one never views the drum.

As the Examiner has recognized, the primary reference to Oshika does not show or describe an image display with regularly arranged ink holding regions

surrounded by ink repelling regions.

Higuchi describes forming an image by uniformly coating ink 4 on ink holding layer 2a on the drum using a soft spongy roller 51 as described in column 9, lines 14-19, distributing the charges supplied to ink on the ink holding layer to form a latent image (i.e., one that is not displayed, but rather which is used for printing) as described in column 9, lines 28-34. With regard to the ink in which the charges are distributed according to the latent image, Higuchi describes selectively transferring only the ink portions to which the charges are supplied onto a recording medium such as plain paper or a plastic sheet in the transfer section 7, as is described in column 8, lines 35-40.

In sharp contrast, claim 1 of the present application requires that a real image (one that is displayed) by ejecting ink droplets toward the image display surface having ink holding regions and ink repelling regions. The real image of the present invention is thus writable and rewritable.

Oshika describes a device where ink is applied on the surface and is thereafter removed. However, Oshika does not show or suggest a display surface with ink holding regions or ink repelling regions. Higuchi does not make up for this deficiency, as Higuchi teaches a printing technology which involves a transferring method where an ink holding layer on the printing drum is used as the transfer source. If the combination proposed by the Examiner were made, one would substitute the drum 1/ink holding layer 2 of Higuchi for the recording head 4 of Oshika. This would not yield an image display surface with ink holding regions and ink repelling regions. Rather, if the combination were made, the combination might have the ability to apply pixels of colored ink to an image display surface, but would not have an image display surface with the pixel properties recited in the claims.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the application be reconsidered, that claims 1-5 be allowed, and that the application be passed to issue.

Should the Examiner find the application to be other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the local telephone number listed below to discuss any other changes deemed necessary in a telephonic or personal interview.

A provisional petition is hereby made for any extension of time necessary for the continued pendency during the life of this application. Please charge any fees for such provisional petition and any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 50-2041 (Whitham, Curtis, Christofferson & Cook).

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Whitham", is written over the typed name.

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